

THE CHRONICLE

R. H. TANCY, Editor.

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MR. CHERRY.

The gentleman whose name heads this article is ostensibly a quiet citizen of Nashville, a capitalist very largely interested in various enterprises. But notwithstanding this apparent privacy of his character, there is no man who exercises a greater influence in Tennessee politics and his fine Italian hand is apparent in all public matters in this State.

He is not a blustering boss like his late partner, the wily and industrious Tom O'Connor. Yet from his perch behind the throne he has "managed the thing" about as well as Tom did, though the signs of the times point to a decay of his power.

What does this subtle control of Tennessee politics by a man like Mr. Cherry mean? That's a problem which Tennessee voters could work out for themselves. Mr. Cherry is no politician in the ordinary acceptance of the term. That is, he does not burn with ambition for political notoriety and is not consumed with party zeal for the party's sake. Mr. Cherry is what might be termed a professional money getter. He is a rich man and gives his time and attention to increasing his store.

Wherever Mr. Cherry appears, therefore, it may be safely concluded that there is money in sight and that the object of his appearance is to scoop the funds into his own plethoric pocket. Mr. Cherry used to be a very good Republican. At least when he and Tom O'Connor were operating together, Tom ran the Democracy and in his heartiest and most cordial manner introduced Mr. Cherry to certain East Tennessee members of the Legislature as "the Republican member of our firm." About this time, too, Mr. Cherry held a high place in a Garfield and Arthur club.

But since the death of O'Connor, Mr. Cherry has come forth as the only genuine fountain head Democrat in Tennessee, and has spent his shrewd pretty freely to control the party and to cast out men that might interfere with such control. At a great cost he has maintained the Nashville World. The paper has never paid expenses, but Mr. Cherry has persistently footed deficiency bills and kept it running. Not content with this, he has paid over \$100,000 for the American, and seems desirous to control the entire press at the State capital.

Why has Mr. Cherry lavished his beloved ducats on an unprofitable newspaper enterprise? He is a sound and successful financier; it is somewhat peculiar that he should stick to a thing that don't pay. Why has he developed such a fondness for newspaper property? He is not a journalist, and as far as the investment in itself may be considered, he could make a better use of his money.

Citizens of Tennessee, the solution to this apparent mystery lies in these words, viz: The Penitentiary Lease. There is big money in that lease, and that is what Mr. Cherry is after. He wants all that can be made out of it, and in order to accomplish his ends he must control politics and legislation, and a newspaper is his instrument for that purpose.

Furthermore, it would be a big pile of money in Mr. Cherry's pocket to get very low freight rates for his penitentiary products and hence comes all this howl for a railroad commission. When a commission was created the first thing it was found doing was fixing rates in Mr. Cherry's interest.

This commission was enjoined by the courts and the people voted it down, but in spite of the law and in spite of the ballot box, Mr. Cherry is again moving heaven and earth to get another and a stronger commission bill through the Legislature.

A railroad commission will be hurtful to the interests of the State and a positive injury to her people. It will benefit no one but this sleek, fat spider of Nashville, who gluts his selfishness on the flies that may be ensnared into his web.

All of these things shall be painted and blazoned in such vivid colors before the people of Tennessee that they shall become thoroughly acquainted with them, and Legislators will be held strictly accountable for their action.

EVARTS' SPEECH.

Hon. Wm. M. Everts, the newly elected Senator from New York, made a speech before the Union League Club recently, in which he took occasion to spit a great deal of venom at the South and to declare that the success of the Democracy "brings us once more to the position of affairs and complexion of sections as we found them in 1860."

Of course Mr. Everts knew that this was not in any sense true. He was not trying to deliver himself of an honest utterance. He was simply carrying out the programme of his party by making a strong and final appeal to those prejudices on which it has based a posthumous existence for twenty years.

Mr. Everts is a man who stands high in the councils of the Republican party and is very generally spoken of as its presidential candidate four years hence. His speech, therefore, may be taken as indicating its general policy, and in that light, is the best evidence of its moribund condition. A party that must, per force, appeal to passions after a lapse of twenty years cooling time, is sadly in want of material, and makes a poor show of principles. Cleveland's administration and the conservative control of the South will form a coat of mail for the Democracy, on which such shafts as these will fall harmlessly.

Such speeches as Mr. Everts' will be certain to keep the South "solid" and too freely indulged in, must produce nausea among the more sensible and more patriotic of Northern Republicans.

The Nashville Banner of Tuesday credits an article copied from the Chronicle to the Tobacco Leaf. Some time ago it imputed one of our editorials to the Knoxville Chronicle, and still worse, it credited another to the Gallatin Chronicle. We beg our Nashville contemporary for our own sake and that of other newspapers, to be more particular in this matter.

ATTENTION, FARMERS.

There is one idea in connection with the railroad commission question that we especially call to the attention of our farmer readers. It is this: What they must have cheap transportation to seaboard markets for their tobacco crop or the price of the staple will greatly deteriorate. They must have low rates on the food, clothing, articles of household use and farming implements that are brought here from a distance or such things will come to them very dearly.

Now the commission bill before the legislature provides that no more shall be charged for a short haul than for a long haul. That is, that the charge on goods brought from Nashville to Clarksville shall be in the same proportion according to distance as the charge on goods from New York to Clarksville.

The result of this will be to raise the through rates as much as the local rates are reduced, and it is easy to see what a hardship it will work on the people who pay freight.

The amount of shipping between Clarksville and Nashville, or between any two points in Tennessee, is a small matter compared with the large amount of "through freight" carried out of and brought into the State.

No railroad in the State now fixes its local tariffs as high as its charter allows, but as sure as a commission of incompetent cranks gets to fooling with these local rates, through rates will have to be put up, and the people will suffer in consequence.

It will cause a decline in the price of tobacco, wheat, cotton and all produce shipped out of the State and a rise in all kinds of merchandise brought into this border.

Remember this, dear farmers, when the demagogues come round and talk to you about "grinding monopolies."

LAWYERS AS EDITORS.

Mr. John J. Vertrees, agent, is now around among the lawyers of the state to find an editor for the American when Mr. Cherry shall come into possession of his own.

So far as we have heard his search has not been rewarded with success; the legal lights are loathe to give up their profession for the dubious field of journalism.

We think Mr. Vertrees makes a mistake in this regard; a good lawyer who can write a very readable article occasionally is not necessarily a good editor. The fact is, no man whose mind has been trained in one groove of thought can succeed in newspaper work. The editor of a daily paper needs something besides the sound judgment and business sense that characterizes the successful lawyer. He must have literary acumen, (a thing rarely found in the lawyer), and a wide range of information.

The man who has had time to master the law thoroughly and give proper attention to his practice, has had little leisure for the acquirement of that general knowledge necessary to make up of a finished editor. In fact, the logical turn of a lawyer's training leads him to ignore as trivial the lighter study of miscellaneous literature.

Of course there are exceptions to this rule as to all others. For a personal example near home, Col. A. S. Colyar may be cited. But Col. Colyar is a man of rare faculties and has broader attainments outside of his profession than nine lawyers out of ten, and he has been ably seconded by trained journalists. If statistics could be taken on the subject they would doubtless lead to the revelation that the majority of lawyers who have followed their calling until middle life and then undertaken to show the world how a newspaper ought to be run, didn't succeed in the manner they expected.

THE PRIVILEGE TAX.

The movement for the repeal of the merchant's privilege tax, begun by the business men of Clarksville last year, is taking shape before the Legislature and promises to bear fruit. Petitions have been pouring in from all over the State asking that the unjust tax be removed, and a law will doubtless be passed responding to the popular clamor.

This tax is not burdensome to the merchants alone, on whom it is directly imposed, but is paid in a great degree by the public at large. The merchants, of course, count the tax in computing the cost of their goods and get a large portion of it back in the profit made.

A prominent merchant of this city recently called our attention to a gross injustice that the privilege tax works on Clarksville merchants and those of other Tennessee towns. He said there was no such tax in Kentucky, from whence, Clarksville draws a large portion of her trade, and Hopkinsville merchants on that account have a decided advantage over those of this city.

We hope that our representatives will give their earnest attention to this matter and see that the merchants' privilege tax is wiped out.

We publish elsewhere in this issue numerous opinions from the newspapers of the State concerning the Railroad Commission bill. These papers are all Democratic in politics. A large majority of them were "Bate papers" in 1882 and quite a number supported the entire Democratic ticket last year. Nothing better indicates popular sentiment than the tone of the country press.

SOME of the able lawyers in the Legislature who framed the "Railroad Ruination Bill" were looking out for number one, and evidently believe that they should come in for a share of the spoils. Section 5th of the bill provides that the railroads be made to pay a reasonable fee to the attorney who prosecutes a claim for damages, arising under the act, against them.

SENATOR JOHN Y. KEITH, of Madison, has introduced a bill authorizing the people of Tennessee to call a constitutional convention. The American deems it by far the most important matter before the Legislature this session.

THE bill to place Gen. Grant on the list of retired army officers failed in the House. We have no fears as to the result of this measure.

MATTERS AND THINGS.

The Pulaski Citizen truly observes that "the Cherry brand upon anything is prima facie evidence of cussedness."

It seems to be very generally conceded that Senator Garland, of Arkansas, will be made Attorney-General.

It was Patriot Johnson, "the sweet good vine" from Williamson, who introduced the new commission bill into the House.

The public would like to know why ex-Warden Tom Waters thought the penitentiary was "a school for crime," but the investigating committee declined to let him testify.

The West Tennessee Whig thinks a "paper" should not be judged by the bigness of its size. Probably the oldness of its age might be suggested as a proper criterion.

We wish to keep the fact fresh in the minds of our immediate representatives in the Legislature that the people of Montgomery county oppose a railroad commission, and have so expressed themselves at the ballot-box.

Business men everywhere oppose the commission scheme. It is the men who never travel and never ship anything that the demagogues have persuaded into believing that they are oppressed by these "grinding monopolies."

A railroad commission bill has been decided unconstitutional by the courts and the people have rejected the scheme at the ballot box. The constitution and the people be d-d, says the Cherry gang, we want a commission.

Col. Tom Neal, representative from Obion, Lake and Dyer counties, was mistaken for "The Silver King" on the streets of Nashville the other day. His Argentine mustache ought to feel complimented. Col. Neal is a remarkably good looking man.

Senator New, of Cannon, Putnam and DeKalb, three counties that have not one foot of railroad within their borders, introduced the Commission bill in the Senate. His constituents would no doubt appreciate more attention to their material interests and less zeal in the service of Mr. Cherry.

The penitentiary investigating committee refused to take the testimony of a witness who could tell nothing about the condition of things since Gov. Hawkins went out of office. That is not the kind of investigation the people want, and nothing like smothering testimony will be tolerated by the public. Let the whole lot be told.

Our Mr. Munford made a speech opposing the bill to allow criminal defendants to testify. In the course of his remarks he got off the old saw, "The man who has himself for a lawyer, has a fool for a client." The exact relevancy of the quotation don't suggest itself very readily, but it was about as much to the point as anything Mr. Munford had to say on the subject.

The New York correspondent of the Cincinnati Enquirer claims to have received positive information that Senator Bayard has been offered and has accepted the Secretary of State's place in Cleveland's Cabinet. He got his news from Senator Gorham, who was a party of the Sunday conference at Albany.

Col. A. S. Colyar's paper, the American, was the first to point out the apparent collusion between the penitentiary lessees and the late railroad commissioners in fixing up a table of rates. Col. Colyar is now a vigorous defender of the penitentiary lessees, before the investigating committee and we are thereby led to inquire if the American spoke ex cathedra when it made this exposure.

This document of this week has something to say about how the editor of the Chronicle voted last election. The editor of the Democrat represented the bosses at the polls that day and our ticket was submitted to his inspection. It counted all it could against Savage & Co. Several other citizens seem to have voted the same way. The vote at the Market House, where the Democrat was presided, stood, Savage 80, Condon 215.

The new Commission bill provides that the Commissioners shall have a clerk to receive \$1,200 a year salary. The Commissioners are to have \$2,000 a year each, and when their printing bills are paid the expense of the whole concern will take about \$10,000 annually out of the State treasury. The State has got on swimmingly for thirty years without this extra expenditure, and there is no reason why she shouldn't continue to do so.

The new commission bill is not the product of any one brain, but the whole gang of cranks put their heads together and worked over it for weeks. Just where the cynnny hand of our Mr. Munford asserts itself we are not prepared to say, nor can we detect the touch of our esteemed Senator Bagwell, but that both of these gentlemen brought their statesmanship and legal acumen into the framing of the bill is generally acknowledged.

Ex-Gov. Brown, of Tennessee, is reported to have said: "Bayard is making a mistake in going into the Cabinet. It is the end of his representation of Delaware. That State has no one to fill his place, yet it will never send him back again. His Presidential aspirations are also at an end. He has no further show for the Presidency. His place was in the Senate, not in the Cabinet. Mr. Cleveland also makes a mistake to take Bayard from the Senate. It is weakening the Democratic line where it is weakest now."

Mr. Dorsheimer introduced a bill to regulate coinage in the National House of Representatives Tuesday, which has attracted marked attention. Mr. Dorsheimer's intimacy with the President elect has caused the suspicion that the measure may reflect the policy of the new administration. It provides for the issue of Treasury notes, payable on demand either in silver dollars or bars at the rate of 480 grains to the dollar. Section two provides for the deposit of coin of bullion, for which notes shall be given, redeemable in like material. Section three provides for the free coinage of the gold and silver product of the United States. No foreign silver shall be admitted to the United States without paying the highest rate of duty imposed on manufactured silver. Section four provides for the exchange of the silver dollars and certificates issued under the former act for the note authorized by this act.

THE COMMISSION INQUIRY.

Not Popular with the State Press—What the Country Weeklies Say.

IT NEVER DID MEAN ANYTHING. Murfreesboro News.

The cry of carrying out the pledges and the platform, amounts to nothing. The rejection of the Democratic candidates for Commissioners was equivalent to the rejection of that portion of the platform.

RATHER PECULIAR.

It is singular that the men who have little or nothing to ship over the roads are the ones that are crying out most strenuously for a railroad commission, while those who are largely concerned in shipping and receiving are, as a general thing, opposed to it.

THE THING IN A NUT SHELL.

The Railroad Commission bill is set for the special order of business, Feb. 16, at 11 a.m. The interests of the State and the welfare of the people demand the repeal of the law and the abandonment of further legislation upon the subject.

THE PEOPLE OPPOSE IT.

If the Democrats of Tennessee had been in favor of railroad commissioners, expensive and useless officials by the way, they would have elected their own candidates at the last election when they elected Cleveland and Bate. The last expression by the people is a declaration in opposition to a railroad commission.

WIPED IT OUT.

The press of the state are almost unanimously in favor of the repeal of the law of the railroad commission. They are of the opinion that the result of the late election shows conclusively that the people are opposed to the law, which has been declared unconstitutional, from our statute books, and further, that certain defeat awaits the party at the next election if the law is not repealed and that feature eliminated from the next party platform.

THERE'S METHOD IN SUCH MADNESS.

There is more madness than sense in the efforts of a few Nashville ring masters to load the Democratic party down in another campaign with the commission folly. In this view of the present odds law, and against any further legislation upon the subject. Suitable people everywhere will approve the course.

AS A MATTER OF PARTY POLITY.

If the legislature shall respect the voice of the people, very short work will be made of this question. It is a conceded fact that many Democrats voted for Democratic candidates only because they were the nominees of the party and that for but party, ties the majority against them would have been overwhelming. In this view of the case statesmanship and good party policy would say that this question should be taken out of politics.

THE WHOLE HOG OR NONE.

If the railroads must have a commission, why not the coal, iron and manufacturing companies, and the steamboat lines, and the telegraph system? Let us have a commission over the farmers who charge the exorbitant price of sixty-five cents a bushel for wheat and one dollar a load for crooked stove-wood; yes, give us a railroad commission. In this view of the case the latter if it will increase the rates of subscription and advertising as the R. R. Com. increased the freight.

REPEAL THE LAW.

The Alabama legislature set down upon the proposed stringent railroad commission legislation—her people have had enough of such humbuggery. In the national legislature, the matter is stirring but little better. The house passed the Reagan bill. The house instead of concurring, substituted the Gullom bill—a very different bill. The senate won't have it. The Reagan bill, consequently, neither bill will become a law. Now, let the Tennessee legislature pass the Lamb bill on this subject, and take the question out of politics.

HARKEN TO THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.

Say what they will, the thinking people of Tennessee are opposed to this war on railroad property. Many scratched the ticket, thus signifying their disapproval, while many more who disapproved supported the ticket only because Messrs. Savage, Gordon and Turley were party nominees. If this question is not removed from party politics the fate of Democracy in Tennessee is sealed. We warn members, therefore, against the attempt of a few designing men to lead them astray on this question.

DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND.

Our county Treasurer, Mr. A. J. Skidmore, last week collected the handsome sum of \$6,640.84 from the Nashville & Chattanooga railroad for taxes on that portion of the line that lies in the county. This is a pretty large amount of money for the county to pay to the county, and it swells our funds to a very important bulk. When we consider how largely these railroads contribute to our treasury, and how great and numerous the benefits we derive from them in every way we cannot understand why some men are so down on them and want a commission appointed over them to take charge of their affairs.

THE CAT IN THE MEAL TUB.

By hook or crook, this same man (Mr. Cherry) has managed to capture a lot of leaders, so-called of Democracy, through whom he hopes to control the Democratic party. These satellites are now at work trying to impress the Legislature with the necessity of another railroad commission. This, too is in Mr. Cherry's interest. Everybody knows and understands what the late commission attempted to do for him, and he wants to try it again. He is known to have declared that "we (meaning himself and three or four of his henchmen, who were standing by) intend to control the railroads." If the Democratic party, through its representatives in the Legislature, shall follow the advice of the men, through whom this man moves, the party will receive and justify merit overwhelming defeat.

THE HAND WRITING ON THE WALL.

Rich County News.

If the General Assembly under the pressure renews the war on the railroads, the defeat of the party is inevitable. Scarcely fair to say, however, many of whom supported the Commission candidates before on purely party grounds will not again stultify themselves by voting against their convictions. A party which will not profit by the lesson taught in November last is doomed to defeat. The repeal of this law and the abandonment of the Commission is what conservative Democrats ask of the present Legislature. Nothing short of this will restore harmony and recruit the party.

OLIVER WANTS MORE.

Striped for party enforcement the proposition for a commission would have been defeated by two or three to one. The present legislature, under the lead of reckless bosses, is being sorely pressed to pass another law. Let them stand together and with all their force resist such a pressure. The goal of the State and the party demands the repeal of the law and the abandonment of all attempts at further legislation. It is not a question as to the power of the legislature to regulate railroads as much as the wisdom of crippling or antagonizing these great interests. We want more railroads.

THERE ARE NONSENSE DEAF AS THOSE WHO WILL NOT HEAR.

Senator Lamb truly represents the sentiment of Lincoln and Giles in his bill for a repeal of the railroad commission. Nothing is clearer than the fact that his constituents want this illegal and useless fraud out of the way. It is said that a few hot-headed leaders are still urging and pushing for the enactment of another law on the ground that the platform calls for a commission. Are not these gentlemen aware of the fact that the candidates, platform and everything pertaining to the iniquitous thing were squelched by the vote of the people?

OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

Congress for the past week has been the scene of destructive dilly-dally and mischievous cranks. Appropriation bills and other important if not indispensable legislation have been delayed and an extra session seems very probable. Well, who cares? Let an extra session be called. A member of Congress is paid \$5,000 a year and whether he legislates in Washington or vegetates in his rural home, he draws his pay all the while. We pay Congress to make laws. It is desperately difficult to make these down to earth work. They are a needed thing, they add up all together except on a motion to adjourn, but since they are so much per year let their alleged work be continuous throughout the year. It would be better to pay them by the day and only when they are in their seats. When a member fails to answer to his name on roll call coddle his wages. If he is tardy, require him to bring a written excuse from his wife, or these who dine at his table. There would be less absenteeism, less skipping around this capitol, less solitary and informal adjournment to the restaurants in the basement of the Capitol. The fact is, that the people are too easy and lenient with those who, with mounting hypocrisy, call themselves "public servants."

GREAT FAITH IN THE PURIFYING POWER OF THE WINDS.

The banner charges, and we believe, that this attack upon railroad interests has been gotten up to conceal the rascality of the ring, and that the ring hopes by these methods to be permitted to prolong its lease of prisoners and carry on its devilish work. The duty of the legislature in the premises is plain, to-wit: Dethrone this monster ring, emancipate it, tear it into shreds, and cast it to the four winds to be purged. Then repeal the iniquitous law known as the Commission Act. Having by the former removed a foul, cancerous growth from party politics, and by the latter removed all obstacles to the material development and prosperity of Tennessee, members may feel doubly assured of a sustained and approving constituency.

BUT WHEN THERE WOULD BE NO SALARIES, YOU KNOW.

Let Democratic members of the legislature not deceive themselves or be deceived by the somewhat plausible arguments of intemperate parties, who are urging the amendment or re-enactment of "another commission law." There is nothing in the situation in Tennessee demanding a commission. The common law with other statutes now upon the books are ample to protect the people against extortion and unjust expropriation. The recent Ohio verdict which gave a large judgment against a railroad for discriminating in favor of the Standard Oil Company, was based upon the common law statute, not near so rigid as the act of 1865 still in force in this State. If discrimination can be prohibited under a common law statute in Ohio without the aid of a commission, what is the necessity of a commission in Tennessee?

A STUMBLING BLOCK TO PARTY UNITY.

The news reported the entire ticket in the last campaign, but we are of the opinion if the commission plan is to prevail, that Democrats as commissioners are preferable to Republicans, but is a commission advisable or necessary? Looking at the returns of the November election we find twenty thousand Democrats who repudiated the commission theory and it is safe to say as many more would have done likewise but for their fealty to party platform and party candidate. Senator Turley, who does not carry a Cabinet portfolio, but asks that Mr. Thurman may be appointed, the objection has been made that he is too old, but he is younger than Gladstone, Bismarck, or Motke. He is almost among the able. No man is better equipped for the portfolios of State, Finance, Justice or the Interior. It is no disparagement of others to say that he is the most profound lawyer that has been in public life since the war; he is thoroughly posted in home and foreign questions. While a member of the Senate he exercised without arrogance, and through a voluntary recognition of his superiority, the functions of leader and counselor to the Democratic side. There were able Democratic Senators around him, there were Lamar, Beck, Vest, McDonald, Pendleton, Voorhees, Hill, Morgan and others who might have "led" had they not been so thoroughly posted in home and foreign questions. While a member of the Senate he exercised without arrogance, and through a voluntary recognition of his superiority, the functions of leader and counselor to the Democratic side. There were able Democratic Senators around him, there were Lamar, Beck, Vest, McDonald, Pendleton, Voorhees, Hill, Morgan and others who might have "led" had they not been so thoroughly posted in home and foreign questions. While a member of the Senate he exercised without arrogance, and through a voluntary recognition of his superiority, the functions of leader and counselor to the Democratic side. 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